

thank the gentleman from Mobile, AL (Mr. Callahan). We have agreed to pair on this. Hurricane Georges will undoubtedly hit either his congressional district or mine. We have reached the decision that the best place for us to be tomorrow with is with our families and with our constituents. The gentleman from Alabama is going to vote for it. I am going to vote against it.

Our Nation is \$5.5 trillion in debt. We owe the Social Security trust fund \$800 million. As a Nation we squander \$365 billion a year, that is \$1 billion a day, on interest on the national debt. Yet because for the first time in 30 years we are not borrowing money to make ends meet, we are deciding to find all sorts of new ways to give it away. That is wrong. It totally ignores national defense.

This year's Republican Congress will spend \$30 billion less in real dollars, in 1998 dollars, than they did in 1995 on defense. We are sending kids out in 30-year-old warships, 30-year-old helicopters, 30-year-old warplanes. The consequences of that can be dead young Americans in some future war. If we have any money left over, we need to take care of that.

We owe the Social Security trust fund \$800 million. That is a pledge that has to be fulfilled. Above all, if you have seen Private Ryan, there is an entire generation of Americans who served this country in the military who were promised free health care for life if they fulfilled their end of the obligation and now when they are too old to do anything about it, we are not fulfilling it. The defense health care is underfunded by \$600 million next year. Yet we can find time to give big contributors a tax break but not keep the promises we have already made.

For those reasons, I want to be recorded as voting "no."

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. CALLAHAN) and myself have agreed to pair tomorrow on the vote on the tax package. I would like for my statement to be included in the RECORD at that time, but I will not be here tomorrow to do so. Therefore, I am asking if it would be in order to ask at this time that that statement be included in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may ask unanimous consent to do so.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my statement be included in the RECORD at the appropriate place tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Mississippi?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House, the Chair

postpones further consideration of H.R. 4579 until tomorrow.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CONYERS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAPPAS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PAPPAS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

SAVE SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against another case of reverse Robin Hood. But this time it is stealing from our seniors to give out tax breaks in an election year. When we talk about Social Security, we are talking about one of the most important programs in the history of the United States. This program ensures that our seniors and our disabled will be taken care of. The Social Security program is the result of hard work by working families across this Nation. By dipping into the Social Security cookie jar, we jeopardize the security of seniors who count on these monthly checks during their retirement.

Let me close with a tribute today to the late Claude Pepper, one of the most important advocates for the elderly and for Social Security expansion in the United States Congress. Claude Pepper cared about seniors across this Nation and he fought to protect them so that they could enjoy their elderly years in life without being afraid of where their next check was coming from. As a Member of Congress from the State of Florida, Claude Pepper's legacy for fighting for the rights of seniors and the poor speaks for itself. He would not stand for election-year gimmicks that punished the working families who have contributed to the Social Security trust fund. In the name of decency and in the name of Claude Pepper, the leadership of this House should vote to save Social Security first. This is a mean-spirited attack on the needy. We have a responsibility to today's seniors and to tomorrow's seniors to protect this valuable program.

ENDING MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOEHLERT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to air a few moments of thoughts regarding some issues important to this Congress and not just to the politicians that were elected to this House but to the folks back home in Illinois. I represent a very diverse district. I represent the south suburbs of Chicago and the south side of the city of Chicago, a lot of rural and bedroom communities. They often ask important questions. One of the most important questions we have this year is they know that Social Security long-term has financial problems and they know there is unfairness in the tax code. They say there is a question out there, can we save Social Security and can we eliminate the marriage tax penalty, for example, in the same effort?

We Republicans believe that you can, that you can save Social Security and you can bring greater fairness to our tax code by working to eliminate the marriage tax penalty, and we have a plan. When I think of Social Security, just like everyone, you always think of your own family and how issues affect your family. When I think of Social Security, I think of my mom and dad, Marilyn and LaVern Weller, a couple of farmers back home in Illinois who are retired and on Social Security. I also think of my Aunt Mary and my Aunt Eileen, my Uncle Jack and Uncle Bob who are also on Social Security. When I think of the marriage tax penalty, I think of my sister Pat and her husband Rich, a teacher and a farmer back in rural Sheldon, Illinois, and they like 28 million other married working couples with two incomes suffer the marriage tax penalty.

We have had a big victory today in the passage of legislation which will help save Social Security by setting aside \$1.4 trillion, twice what President Clinton suggested back in January we set aside, more than two times the \$600 billion, in fact \$1.4 trillion we are setting aside for the future efforts over the next couple of years to save Social Security. This is a big victory for people like my mom and dad and the senior citizens in Illinois.

I am often asked as well as we work to bring fairness to the tax code a pretty simple question, and, that is, is it fair, is it right that under our current tax code that almost 28 million married working couples, people like my sister Pat and her husband Rich who because they have two incomes under our tax code pay more in taxes just because they are married under our tax code? A lot of us think that is wrong. That is why addressing the marriage